



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **Department of Health Issues Swine Flu Guidance**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is providing guidance for the public and physicians regarding swine flu.

While no cases have been identified in North Dakota at this time, as of April 26, 2009, 40 cases of swine flu have been confirmed in the United States, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The confirmed cases are in California, Kansas, New York City, Ohio and Texas. The cases appear to be mild; only one person was hospitalized, and at this time, all the known cases in the U.S. have recovered. Mexico also is experiencing an outbreak with an undetermined amount of cases there.

“This is a situation we are paying close attention to,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “We have sent information to physicians, hospitals and local public health units asking them to increase surveillance for the disease. We’re asking the general public to follow guidelines just like during a regular flu season to help reduce the spread of the disease.”

The Department of Health offers these recommendations:

- As always, if you are sick you should stay home from work or school to avoid spreading the infection to others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear ill.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

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Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).

- Wash hands frequently.
- People experiencing cough, fever and fatigue, possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting should contact their doctor. If you have recently traveled to an area with confirmed cases, make sure your doctor knows your travel history.
- The CDC is recommending that any non-essential travel to Mexico be cancelled. For updated travel restriction information, visit [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/). Look for “Travel Notices.”

Swine flu viruses are not transmitted by food and a person cannot get swine flu from eating pork products. Drugs called antivirals can reduce the severity of the disease if taken early. North Dakota does have a stockpile of antivirals if needed.

“The Department of Health has plans in place to respond to public health emergencies,” said Dwelle. “We are watching this situation closely and have resources ready if we need them. It’s also important for the public to pay attention and to follow guidelines given from our department and their local public health unit.”

Information about swine flu can be found on the CDC’s website at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).

For more information, contact Loreeta Canton or Stacy Eberl, public information officers, at 701.328.2372.

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